

**DANVERS SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

October 17, 2016

Francis Mills Communication Center, E115, Danvers High School

School Committee Members Present: Eric Crane
Jeffrey Kay, Secretary
Arthur Skarmeas
David Thomson, Chair
Mary Beth Verry

VOTED: Resolution against MA Ballot question #2 – Mr. Crane moved to adopt a resolution supporting a “no” vote on MA Ballot question #2. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Animals in Schools Policy – Mr. Skarmeas moved to approve the DPS Animals in Schools Policy IMG for a first reading. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Overnight and Out-of-State Field Trip requests – Mr. Crane moved to approve the overnight field trip requests of the DHS Ice Hockey team to travel to Marlborough, MA from December 3-4, 2016 and the DHS DECA team to travel to Washington, DC from November 17-20, 2016. Mr. Skarmeas seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Fundraising requests: Mr. Skarmeas moved to approve the fundraising requests from the DHS Classes of 2018, 2019 and 2020, the Riverside and Great Oak Elementary schools. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Minutes – Mr. Kay moved to approve and release the September 12, 2016 regular meeting minutes and the release of the Executive Session minutes from 8/10/15, 11/9/15, 1/11/16 and 4/11/16. Mr. Crane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VOTED: Adjournment – Mr. Skarmeas moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:52 p.m. Mr. Kay seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Thomson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the DPS Mission statement was read. Mr. Thomson inquired if anyone in the audience was recording the proceedings. No audience member was identified as recording the meeting.

I. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT, COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY

Dr. Dana updated the committee on the DPS Mobile App and stated that, to date, the app has been downloaded over 1200 times.

Dr. Dana was pleased to report that the Thorpe Elementary School 50th anniversary celebration was a great success and very well attended. Mr. Crane also stated that the event was wonderful.

Dr. Dana reminded the committee of the Danvers Board of Selectmen Financial Summit meeting being held on Tuesday, October 18th.

II. INFORMATION FROM THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – Mrs. Ambrozavitch introduced DHS Junior, Daisy Powers, as the new student representative to the committee. Daisy reported on events and information from all seven DPS schools.

III. INFORMATION FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. **MASS Academic Excellence Awards** – Dr. Dana presented the 2016-2017 M.A.S.S. Academic Excellence Awards to Danvers seniors, Julia Boutchie and Crony Patel. Mrs. Ambrozavitch outlined both students’ accomplishments and Dr. Dana presented them with award certificates and displayed the name plaque that will be placed in the High

School display case. The Committee congratulated the recipients.

2. **Arson Watch Reward Program Poster Contest** – Danvers Fire Chief Robert Pyburn and Dr. Dana congratulated the winners of the 2016 2017 Arson Watch Reward Program Poster Contest, Jenna Walke and Nicole Bourbeau. Ms. Walke was in attendance and displayed her winning poster. Calendars were distributed to the committee and they congratulated the winners.
3. **October 1, 2016 Enrollment Report** – Dr. Dana reviewed the enrollment numbers for the 16-17 school year by grade and the numbers in class sizes. She reviewed the enrollment chart noting a total 3582 students, which is lower than last year. She outlined the reasons for the decrease in enrollment, but told the committee that overall, the enrollment numbers fall in line with historical enrollment data. Dr. Dana fielded specific questions about class sizes and the number of students leaving the district to attend private schools and other public schools.
4. **Curriculum/Instruction Priorities & Student Achievement Data**
Dr. Dana began the presentation by presenting the DPS Vision statement for all graduating students and noted that the vision statement drives all of the work for student success. The presentation “Danvers Public Schools – Our Story” included successes from DHS in MCAS growth, PSAT and SAT growth, college acceptances, a lower dropout rate and increase in student involvement. Sue Ambrozavitch introduced DHS Asst. Principal, Sean Emberley, who presented data on student achievement in state testing, college acceptance and student involvement.

Dr. Dana introduced K-12 Curriculum Director, Mary Wermers, who spoke about student achievement in grades Pre K - Grade 8. The data reviewed included both local DPS data and state data. She noted that all schools met or exceeded their logic model goals and reviewed some of the schools’ student learning goals, which included improvement in writing at all levels and improvement in HRMS math problem solving skills. Each school’s professional work for 15-16 was outlined for a specific student goal along with a summary of progress made in that goal. Ms. Wermers reviewed state testing data, improvements made and areas needing improvement.

Ms. Wermers spoke about the MA Accountability system (PPI) and how schools are classified into one of five levels. She was pleased to announce that Riverside School has been upgraded to a Level 1 school by narrowing their proficiency gap. All other schools remained at Level 2. Finally, she outlined the next steps for working with schools and teachers to refine the connection between assessments and instruction.

The Committee congratulated Riverside Elementary for reaching Level 1. Dr. Dana and Ms. Wermers fielded specific questions regarding testing and local assessments.

5. **Fields and MSBA Updates**

Mr. Taverna informed the committee about the progress being made on the Fields project, which includes spring work on the new entrance and ticket booths.

Mr. Taverna outlined the current work being done in conjunction with MSBA, including the receipt of the enrollment letter from MSBA. The School Building Committee will hold its first meeting on October 20th. The next phase will include a feasibility study, choosing an architect and project manager. He also spoke about the enrollment study presented to DPS by MSBA, which projects growth in enrollment, especially at the K-5 level (50-60 students/year.)

6. **Superintendent’s Professional Practice Goal**

Dr. Dana presented her professional practice goal for the 16-17 school year, focusing on the

use of Google Suite, to be in line with the District's use of Google Chromebooks and applications.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution against MA Ballot question #2 – As voted. Mr. Crane read the proposed resolution to the committee members. Concerns about the wording of the question, the need for more charter schools in failing districts to relieve the large number of students on waitlists, serving students of all needs and monies taken from the districts/students to fund charter schools were brought forward by the committee. After the vote, all members signed the resolution.

B. Animals in Schools Policy – The Superintendent recommended the approval of DPS Animals in Schools Policy IMG for a first reading. As voted. Student Services Director, Dr. Mary Tatem, fielded specific questions about the policy. The committee agreed to revisit some of the language in the policy before a second reading.

C. Overnight and Out-of-State Field Trip requests – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the DHS Ice Hockey team to travel to Marlborough, MA from December 3-4, 2016 and the DHS DECA team to travel to Washington, DC from November 17-20, 2016. As voted.

D. Fundraising Requests – The Superintendent recommended the approval of the fundraising requests for the DHS Classes of 2018, 2019 and 2020, the Riverside and Great Oak Elementary schools. As voted.

VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A - Communications – Dr. Dana reviewed the communications in the packet, which included the Northshore Education Consortium Board of Directors meeting agenda and the NEC Executive Director's report.

B. Legislation – Mr. Crane had no legislative updates to report

C. Subcommittee/Liaison Update:

DEEP – Mrs. Verry reminded the community about the 18th Annual DEEP Wine and Food Tasting being held at Danversport Yacht Club on Thursday, October 27th from 6-9 p.m. She also noted that new memberships to DEEP are being accepted and she urged the community to join. Finally she publicly thanked former DHS Graduate, Phillip Morse, for his \$200,000 donation to DEEP to support the teachers and students of DPS.

DanversCARES – Mr. Kay reminded the committee about the first Parent Presentation will be held on "The Secret Life of Teens" on Tuesday, October 25th at DHS at 7 p.m.

SEPAC – Co-chairs, Tom Savage and Jack Billings spoke about the possibility of moving their meetings to the DCAT location. Mr. Savage spoke about "Exceptional Lives" presentation at their last meeting and explained how the program helps parents to access services online, based on need. He said it was very well-received. He outlined the topics of presentations for the remainder of the school year. Dr. Billings spoke about the four yearly goals set by SEPAC which include DCAT taping SEPAC presentations to give access to all parents, the possibility of brief monthly presentations to school committee and an annual program evaluation of the Student Services Department.

VII. MINUTES – As voted

VIII. BUDGET

Mr. Taverna presented the final FY16 budget report, FY17 Budget Adjustment report and the September 2016 monthly budget report.

IX. PERSONNEL

Announcement of Resignations, Leaves of Absence and Appointments – Mrs. Ambrozavitch presented her memo dated October 2016 and asked the committee to contact her with questions.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, November 14, 2016 at 7 p.m. in the Francis Mills Communication Center at Danvers High School.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey Kay, Secretary
Danvers School Committee